

Matwatch '93

Steve

Beverly

Some people, as they say in Ty Ty, Georgia, just flat don't like me. Bet that surprises you, doesn't it? When you publish a newsletter, folks vent their venom on you for the craziest reasons.

Many of you remember my stance on the depiction and treatment of women in wrestling from the original *Matwatch*. It hasn't changed--only intensified. I abhor it. And that stance has led to as much ridicule and hate mail as any stand I have ever taken.

When I formerly attended pay-per-view shows with the "gang of 50" which once migrated from event to event during the halcyon days of TBS' ownership of WCW, I was derided because I didn't share the same value system which found entertaining the exposing of female flesh or the storylines which dramatized physical abuse of women.

I received some of the most intense hate mail ever when I commented how I don't know what it says about the women who will allow themselves to be portrayed in these situations because--in my view--they compound the issue.

Well, gang, get your nasty pens out again because here's my diatribe. Much of it has been rekindled by summer storylines in Memphis involving Brian Christopher Lawler and elements of *Fall Brawl*.

At least seven times during the summer, Christopher was shown in either live studio or taped arena sequences openly body-slammng, punching, kicking or piledriving Ms. Texas. In another situation, Christopher's own father piledrove a heel woman competitor for revenge.

Consider this: at least three rural counties in the WMC-TV coverage area near Memphis have higher per capita rates of domestic violence than some boroughs of New York City. The predominance of the instances involve men abusing women.

We could argue for a century and find equivalent research as to whether television does or does not affect violent

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Pay Effort Fizzles

Fall Brawl Takes a Fall



ne can find pros and cons of intense emotion on the question of World Championship Wrestling initiating a series of monthly pay-per-view cards. However, few can argue with the need for

the opener in the current string of four to be a hot, ring-the-bell show.

Fall Brawl was not.

This show ran the table of flaws from weak execution of matches to an off night for the announcers to mishandling of the top talent to leaving questions unanswered. Until this show, a viewer may have suggested it is impossible to have a poor War Games. *Fall Brawl* proved otherwise.

Among the weaknesses:

***Whereas multiple title changes are predominantly a catalyst to a strong pay-per-view performance, booker

COMMENTARY

Dusty Rhodes still has not learned from the usually-successful Vince McMahon school. You don't put every belt on heels in one night without leaving both viewers and arena fans in a down mood.

***Jesse Ventura's color commentary bordered on both the tasteless and the sexist (see *Steve Beverly* column and *Matwatch '93 Editorials*) and Tony Schiavone and Ventura reduced themselves to calling each other liars at one point, something Jim Ross and Paul E. Dangerously were excoriated by columnists for previously doing.

***Having two fan favorites (Dustin Rhodes and Ricky Steamboat) sell the same rib injury in separate matches was both overkill and unimaginative. The only positive thing was the storylines at least matched the previous day's TBS television efforts.

***Not that anyone cared--but if Thunderbolt Patterson has been and is continuing to appear on Disney-MGM WCW shows as Ice Train's manager, why wasn't he there and why was no mention made of it by the announcers? This is the kind of lack of attention to detail which this group has repeatedly demonstrated.

***Why did Missy Hyatt unite with the Nasty Boys? Other than to give Jesse license to spout off about her anatomy, can anyone zero in on where this was explained? And why did cameras focus on a fan sign welcoming Missy to the Nasty Boys team a full 30 minutes prior to the "surprise."

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Steve Beverly

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behavior. However, Dr. Ted Baehr, a media researcher and sociologist from Atlanta, suggested to a group of my students in late September the evidence is growing clearer on the side of an impact on people predisposed to a particular form of violence.

"It's not that people merely watch televised violence and go out and blow someone away two hours later," says Dr. Baehr. "However, the continued repetition can motivate those who have the bent toward violence imbedded in them. In the case of TV wrestling, it may be fictional---but the mere act of a man physically abusing a woman lends sanction to those who do the same in real life. It's a dangerous concept."

While the young woman who portrays Ms. Texas is the perpetual victim and a popular member of the USWA troupe, one wonders if she considers the ultimate message being delivered behind her storyline.

Then, there is the recent *Fall Brawl*. Jim Ross used to take criticism from writers concerning his double entendre remarks during Missy Hyatt's WCW appearances. I personally talked to Ross about it

"It may be fictional but the mere act of a man abusing a woman lends sanction to those who do the same in real life. It's a dangerous concept."

---Dr. Ted Baehr

and suggested the remarks were not only inappropriate but compromised his credibility as the program anchor. As a friend, my experience with Jim is he listens to rational reasoning. He took it to heart and toned it down.

Now, I wonder if the same critics will come close to being aghast at the sexual and sexist emphasis on two segments of the recent WCW pay-per-view, since much of it involved the sacrosanct Jesse Ventura. First, Jesse was verbally obsessed with Missy's anatomy on her entrance with the Nasty Boys to the point of reducing Ross's old one-liners to the level of the Romper Room. I clocked nearly the first seven minutes of Jesse's color commentary in the tag title match as focused on Missy and her physique. The old-boy school (not only promoters but also a host of male newsletter readers) suggests, "You idiot, what would you expect him to do?"

This is not a politically correct argument because I am anything but on the side of feminazis who take the extreme of male-bashing for fundraising purposes. However, this is a question of human respect and decency. Plus, there is yet another side to the issue.

When ABC won the rights to NFL football on Monday nights in 1970, Roone Arledge realized the presentation would have to be different, in order to attract female viewers as well as hardcore male fans. So, he structured a show with more entertainment value within the game, announcers who did not necessarily revere the NFL as a religion and personality features to show sides of players off the field, humanizing them. *Monday Night Football* treats the female fan with respect, not as an afterthought.

I've heard from dozens of you women subscribers in recent years who tell me your friends refuse to watch

TV wrestling because of the ghastly way women are portrayed and treated.

With both major promotions still struggling to maintain the ratings they have and the syndication lineups dwindling, one wonders why the executives haven't realized the old-boy fraternity has done little to cultivate the female fan and perhaps increase ratings. Of course, it's because the old boys are from the old school which has no respect for women.

I'd like to see wrestling rely on something other than Missy's cleavage for a rating point because in 1993, I firmly believe the industry would be more successful, mature and attractive to women viewers.

Steve Beverly

Fall Brawl Falls

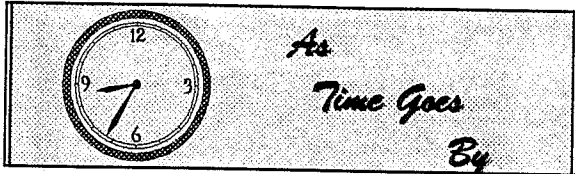
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***Road Warrior Animal's appearance as the babyface War Games coach had to be puzzling to viewers who had not seen the late publicity for Animal. Was it not a waste when he was seen on-camera only about three times in the entire show?

***Explain this---was Leon White's WCW world title, which has been the standard bearer for this group, not reduced to a shell in the wake of billing the Ric Flair-Rick Rude match for "the" world title? Or does THE mean Turner Home Entertainment?

***Once Sting and Davey Boy Smith, the two most pushed fan favorites in this group, were inside the War Games cage, their camera time was slim. Somehow, the equating of Fred Ottman to Hulk Hogan in the finale was the crowning blow.

The high spot, at least in production values, was the Cactus Jack retrospective, narrated by Chris Cruise---who should have been on camera for this show. But WCW had six minutes to kill at the end of War Games. Could we not have had a vocal or in-cage showdown between Cactus and Vader to build *Halloween Havoc*, rather than endless babble between Schiavone and Ventura, ending with Tony proclaiming, "We've just been told it's going to be Cactus Jack against Vader to spin-the-wheel, make-the-deal?" Some drama. The show was anything but a lure for a viewer to spend \$25 this month. Instead of compelling television, this appeared to be an obligatory effort to draw the .5 buy-rate this show apparently attracted to help bail WCW out of a financial deficit. *Matwatch Grade: D+.*



I have not spoken with Eddie Gilbert since his departure from Eastern Championship Wrestling but speculation in his hometown of Lexington, Tn., is Eddie will mount a campaign for county court clerk as a Republican. His mother, Peggy, is chair of the GOP in Henderson County....Global's contract with KTVT/Dallas is a fuzzy. The show did not air in its scheduled Sunday noon slot the last two weeks in September. ...You satellite dish owners may pick up *WCW Worldwide* on Telstar 302, channel 24. WCBS/New York, which airs the show Sundays at 12:30 a.m. (ET) has been turning up on the transponder on a frequent basis.

A number of dish magazines list a WWF feed Friday mornings at 1 a.m. on Galaxy 7, ch. 16 but I'm told the shows are rarely there....Armed Forces Radio Network will carry *Survivor Series* live, along with stations on Jim Ross's *Radio WWF* network... Conflicting reports on pay-per-view. The new newsletter *Buy-Rate* contends *Summer Slam* was off 25-30 per cent over last year. However, Titan Sports claims a jump of up to 25,000 subscribers from '92. Titan contends 1.5 million buys for its four shows this year.

Recent TV moves: as reported, KTLA in Los Angeles now with *WCW Worldwide* at 11 a.m. (PDT). WCW offers some payment to KTLA for the airings. *Worldwide* has also replaced *WWF Challenge* in Philly. Titan refuses to pay compensation and WCW did for the slot. In Memphis, WCW is off, *WWF Challenge* moves to Sundays at 11:35 p.m. and Global has been picked up by WMC for a 1:35 a.m. Monday slot. *Challenge* has gained the midnight hour after *Saturday Night Live* on WSMV/Nashville.

Joe Pedicino and Boni Blackstone were such a hit as co-hosts of *Around the NFL* on WCNN-AM in Atlanta Sept. 19, they were asked back a second week. They also helmed a two-hour lead-in to the Falcons-Steelers Monday night game Sept. 27.

THE REAL WRESTLING HOTLINE

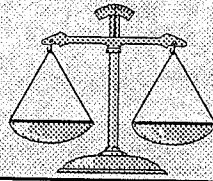
Dave Meltzer (M-W-F)

Steve Beverly (Tu-Sat)

Scott Hudson (Thu)

John Arezzi (Sun)

1-900-903-9030



MATWATCH '93 EDITORIALS

Inarguably, Jesse Ventura redefined the role of color commentator for television wrestling in the mid-1980s. While we have seen better technical analysts, no one can deny Ventura's injection of personality to the sidekick role left the Coach John Heaths of the world at a diagram of quadriceps.

However, Ventura's talent and stature and reported half-million dollar contract do not leave him unaccountable. Early during the *WCW Fall Brawl* pay-per-view, Jesse uttered an unconscionable crack, ostensibly in the name of humor.

When Tex Slazenger and Shanghai Pierce entered the ring, Ventura said: "These two rate right below Ann Richards as the most popular people in Texas. In third place was Lee Harvey Oswald." Had Ventura left the final sentence off, he may have drawn a chuckle or two from those in the political arena.

However, the state of Texas has paid a dear price for November 22, 1963. The state did not kill John F. Kennedy. With the exception of one mindless individual, no one living in Texas was responsible for that tragedy.

Let Oliver Stone plow through conspiracy theories. But the subject is hardly in the ballpark for cheap wrestling humor.

Sometimes, Jesse, you're not funny. The night of September 19 you clearly were not with this remark. To those from Texas subscribing to the pay-per-view, *Matwatch '93* calls on Ventura to offer an unqualified apology.

On a similar note, Ventura did not own a copyright on tastelessness in the same weekend. On the Sept. 18 edition of *North Georgia Wrestling*, seen only on WTLK in Atlanta and a few scattered independent and cable stations in northeast Georgia, veteran wrestler Ron Starr again proved some wrestlers do not know when to keep their mouths shut in an effort to draw heat.

In an interview to tout his return from Puerto Rico, Starr began relating of his tag team partnership with Invader I (Jose Gonzales) in the San Juan area (which had little to do with the small Georgia group). Said Starr: "Invader I killed Jay Youngblood in the ring. And everybody knows he killed one of the meanest hombres around---Bruiser Brody."

In years past, Ox Baker exploited the out-of-ring deaths of Ray Gunkel and Alberto Torres (who both died of causes not directly related to their matches with Baker) as a matter of joy over "killing" opponents. That, alone, is abominable enough.

However, a score of wrestlers will go to their graves with nightmares over the 1988 death of Brody in a Puerto Rico dressing room. Still others debate today whether justice was served in Gonzales' ultimate acquittal of that stabbing.

Starr's televised remarks, albeit on a small network, are prime illustrations why many viewers have become fed up with wrestling. To exploit a tragedy such as Brody's in this fashion reduces Starr, in our view, to the level of pond scum. One has to ask if there is no depth to which some wrestlers will sink.

MATWATCH '93 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are available at \$5 for 3 issues in the U.S. and Canada, \$9 for 3 issues overseas.

Gift subscriptions of \$5 will earn you one bonus issue.

Please make checks to STEVE BEVERLY, not to MATWATCH '93. Mail check, cash, or money order to: STEVE BEVERLY, 165 SMITH CHAMBERLAIN ROAD, MEDINA TN 38355.

THE RATINGS PAGE

CABLE WRESTLING RATINGS

Sept. Averages Rating/Share Total Homes Last Month

WCW Saturday Night	2.2/5.3	1.365 million	2.8/6.8
Monday Night Raw	2.2/3.2	1.326 million	3.2/5.1
WWF All-American	2.1/5.6	1.279 million	2.1/6.0
WCW Main Event	1.6/3.6	982,300	2.2/4.9
WCW Power Hour	1.6/6.9	936,500	1.4/6.4
WWF Mania	1.2/5.0	732,000	1.2/4.8

Week Ending Sept. 6 Rating/Share Total Homes Nat. Rank

WCW Sat. Night (9/4)	1.9/5.0	1.146 million	28
WCW Main Event (9/5)	1.7/3.9	1.021 million	39
WCW Power Hour (9/4)	1.6/6.9	964,000	T44
WWF Mania (9/4)	1.2/4.8	729,000	N/A

Week Ending Sept. 13

WCW Sat. Night (9/11)	2.5/5.4	1.545 million	29
Monday Night Raw (9/13)	1.9/2.9	1.021 million	51
WCW Power Hour (9/11)	1.5/6.6	913,000	N/A
WWF Mania (9/11)	1.1/4.6	674,000	N/A

Week Ending Sept. 20

WCW Sat. Night (9/18)	2.2/5.1	1.333 million	T33
Monday Night Raw (9/20)	2.1/2.9	1.265 million	38
WWF All-American (9/19)	1.9/5.3	1.154 million	T49
WCW Main Event (9/19)	1.6/3.2	965,000	N/A
WCW Power Hour (9/18)	1.5/6.6	906,000	N/A
WWF Mania (9/18)	1.4/6.0	860,000	N/A

Week Ending Sept. 27

Monday Night Raw (9/27)	2.7/3.9	1.614 million	N/A
WCW Sat. Night (9/25)	2.4/5.7	1.434 million	N/A
WWF All-American (9/26)	2.3/5.9	1.404 million	N/A
WCW Power Hour (9/25)	1.6/7.8	963,000	N/A
WCW Main Event (9/26)	1.6/3.6	961,000	N/A
WWF Mania (9/25)	1.1/4.5	665,000	N/A

THE REAL WRESTLING HOTLINE

October on Option 2....

***John Clark Interviews
***Jim Herd Speaks Out
***Down & Dirty with Dutch
***Scott Hudson WCW Report
***Georgiann's WWF Report

1-900-903-9030

THE THIRD QUARTER

<u>Show</u>	<u>Rating/Share</u>	<u>Total Homes</u>
Monday Night Raw	2.8/4.4	1.669 million
WCW Saturday Night	2.4/5.9	1.441 million
WWF All-American	2.2/6.4	1.324 million
WCW Main Event	1.9/4.5	1.172 million
WCW Power Hour	1.4/6.4	868,700
WWF Mania	1.2/4.5	768,200

One-month turnarounds are easy to spot in our monthly rundown of cable wrestling ratings. However, the genuine trends develop with the quarterly averages for cable shows. At the end of each quarter is when TBS and USA typically adjust their advertising rates, based on ratings trends.

The quarter was undoubtedly solid for both *WWF Monday Night Raw* and *WCW Saturday Night*. Despite its weakest month to date in September, with only a 2.2 average for its three airings, *Raw* posted the most solid quarterly mark for a cable mat series in more than two years with a 2.8 and the 4.4 per cent share of audience is well over the 4 considered an acceptable cutoff point for prime time viewing.

After a disastrous start under WCW executive producer Eric Bischoff, the Saturday night flagship show began to percolate in mid-August and held its own against college football competition in September to win the month in total homes and lift the June-to-September mean to a 2.4/5.9, with the 5.9 the best Saturday share in six quarters. In mid-summer, the series stemmed its tide of losing regularly head-to-head against *Rugrats* and *Clarissa Explains It All*.

However, from that point, the story goes a bit sour. While *All-American Wrestling* did post an upturn in late September, its pre-emptions for the U.S. Open tennis tournament did not help and the show fell to a 2.2 average in the third quarter, losing out regularly to NASCAR racing on TBS and TNN and TBS movies.

The sore spot for the quarter is *WCW Main Event* which, despite an August rally, could not even muster a 2 average. In an effort to regild the image of the Saturday effort, WCW appears to have all but abandoned focus on Sundays. The Michael Hayes-hosted wraparounds appear to be not having any impact and heaviest promotion is concentrating on rebuilding *Saturday Night*. Further, *Main Event* is showing ratings trends which could result in its most disastrous third quarter ever.

In the morning, the bright spots are *Power Hour* and *WWF Mania* are skewing upward, albeit slightly so. *Power Hour* has inched up to consistent 1.5-1.6 performances and is keeping his total homes level on the rise. *Mania*, while still trailing the pack noticeably, performs 85 per cent better in average rating than the old *WBF Bodystars* in the 10 a.m. (ET) slot on USA.

The key to watch during the fourth quarter: what impact, over the course of October-December, college and NFL football matchups have on wrestling ratings. While *Monday Night Raw* rallied for a 2.7 in late September, that show was opposite a blowout Steelers-Falcons game blacked out in Atlanta. If *Raw* can average in the 2.4-2.5 range and *Saturday Night* a 2.2-2.3 opposite stronger college games as the season progresses, then each series can declare a substantial victory.

Episode III

My Life on the WCW Hotline

Shortly after I revealed, with full sanction of WCW president Jack Petrik, Lex Luger's impending departure from the company in early 1992, Petrik stepped down from WCW, Turner Broadcasting and the Turner board. One could sense the winds of change coming. While Frey was not exactly Jackie Gleason in the personality department, he was acceptably cordial to me in phone conversations and quickly released his planned steroid policy for WCW to me when I asked for it.

To be honest, I had six, maybe seven phone contacts with Frey. Then, suddenly, he became increasingly hard to reach. In one respect, I could understand. He plowed personally into reinventing the format for the flagship Saturday night WCW show, which proved to be a disaster. But I soon learned the former TBS attorney wanted little more to do with me.

In late February 1992, the final annual for the original *Matwatch* was published. You who purchased it know the yearbook included a series of personal insider stories I had collected over four years of following the industry. A few of those stories were none too flattering to some WCW personnel, particularly the one in which I received a telephoned "threat" from Jason Hervey, the at-the-time inamorata of WCW's Missy Hyatt. I detailed the phone messages Hervey and Missy both left me after I merely reported (with attribution) on television and print accounts of their relationship.

ESPN2 Premieres Supercard

BRISTOL CT---ESPN2, the new ABC/Hearst companion cable sports service to ESPN, has premiered the Global Wrestling *Supercard* hour.

The program, which will include replays of first-year Global matches with Craig Johnson, Joe Pedicino and Scott Hudson on commentary, is airing Saturdays and Sundays at 8:30 a.m. (EDT) and Sunday mornings at 2:30 a.m. The show is expected to be slotted for scattered additional slots.

Supercard was dropped from the ESPN lineup last spring after a two-year run. ESPN2 is debuting in eight million homes.

"Brawl" Buy-Rate Scores Fair Gross

(From *Matwatch '93 Reports*)

Fall Brawl, WCW's September pay-per-view special, will apparently post a buy-rate in the neighborhood of 0.45-0.5 per cent.

Early cable estimates from major cities indicate *Brawl* was purchased in 90,000-100,000 homes in the 22-million home pay-cable universe. Final results will not be available until December.

The industry newsletter *Buy-Rate* estimates gross revenues from the show in the \$2.6 million range. WCW reportedly no longer shares revenues with TBS' Turner Home Entertainment subsidiary.

As I was told, Missy blew up after the annual was published and vented her spleen in Frey's office, among other things demanding I be removed from the hotline. Frey was also cultivating a new friendship with Hervey.

One day in late March of '92, Lance Russell, who was still coordinating the hotline, made a trip to Jackson, Tn. to see me. Over lunch, Lance broke the news I had heard rumors of for four weeks: "Steve, I don't agree with this. I'm opposed to it. But Kip wants you off the hotline. I've told him it's a bad move. I've shown him your numbers. But all he says is that you are writing things that are 'upsetting some of our (WCW) people.' I even told him everything you wrote was true. He doesn't care."

What further angered Lance was Frey's proposal to replace me with Diamond Dallas Page. Lance was armed with data to show how heels had been weak performers on the hotline and Lance was skittish of Page's bent toward overt sexual content.

I wrote a cordial and brief resignation letter to Frey. Lance saw it and judged it very professional. He said Frey concurred, but wanted me to give two more weeks of service so they could have time to make a transition to Page. For Lance, I agreed.

Unexpectedly, one week after I submitted my resignation, Frey was given the boot as WCW chief. He had gone on a spending spree for new and existing talent such as Jesse Ventura, Jake Roberts, Rick Rude, Paul E. Dangerously, and Hyatt. Yet, the company was in the dregs of financial woes and his *WCW Saturday Night* creation as a virtual two-hour in-ring talk show dropped six-tenths of a rating point in only eight weeks.

I get a call from Lance at my TV station. "Considering what's happened, I wouldn't blame you if you told these people to stuff it, but I'd like for you to stay with us, if you will." I cannot tell you how much respect and admiration I have for Lance and for the loyalty he gave to me on the project against intense opposition. I agreed. I was no longer doing *Matwatch*, so I hung in there. Besides, with the news Bill Watts was coming on board as the new operations manager, I figured my days were numbered again. Watts was less than enamored of current or former newsletter writers. Plus, who knew the future of WCW?

So when Dave Meltzer wrote I was being axed from the hotline, he was absolutely right. It's uncanny how quickly things can change in the mat industry.

(Next month: the Watts era and the end).

Herd Speaks Out On Dusty, WCW



**THEY
SAID IT!!!**

The Best of September

1. Jesse Ventura/Tony Schiavone, *WCW Saturday Night*: (JV) "If you lost your career, you'd have to call Bill Clinton and see if there was an entitlement program for you." (TS) "And there might be." 2. Ron Starr, *North Ga. Wrestling*: "I've been the partner of Invader I--you know, he's the guy who killed the meanest man in wrestling: Bruiser Brody." 3. Jim Herd, *The Real Wrestling Hotline*: "Dusty Rhodes was a great wrestler and he was able to sell himself. He is not a booker, in my opinion." 4. Bobby Heenan, *Monday Night Raw*: "Hey, Vince, you're gonna have to get a new attorney since Perry Mason died today." 5. Heenan, *MNR*, on Laverne McGill: "Where's Shirley, his tag team partner?" 6. Junior the Puppet, *NGW*, on new WTLK studio: "This place has indoor plumbing--it's a lot better than that other place (channel 69)." 7. Schiavone/Ventura, *Fall Brawl*: (TS) "If anyone knows about liars, it's you." (JV) "Yeah, I sit next to you." (TS) "I should learn when to shut up." 8. Ventura, *FB*, on Mark Bagwell's dancing: "They made a movie, *White Men Can't Jump*. They ought to make a new one, *White Men Can't Dance*." 9. Jim Cornette, *Smoky Mountain*: "Regis Philbin is the 1993 poster boy for Vitalis." 10. John Arezzi, *Pro Wrestling Spotlight*: "Just when you think WCW begins to turn another corner, they do something to make you realize this group has no hope."

11. Schiavone/Ventura, *FB*: (TS) "I had lunch with the Shockmaster a few days ago." (JV) "It's a good thing you didn't have tomato juice." 12. Heenan, *MNR*: "The book, *Under the Tarnished Dome*. Are they talking about Howard Finkel's head?" 13. Vince McMahon, *USWA*: "Tatanka winning the 'unified' world title makes me want to quote Jim Nabors: sur-PRIZE, sur-PRIZE, sur-PRIZE!" 14. Jerry Lawler, *USWA*: "As for the WWF, to quote Beavis and Butthead, it SUX!"

Strongest Comments

1. Terry Funk, *TRWH*: "The people in control of wrestling have no respect, concern, or compassion for it." 2. Herd, *TRWH*: "I don't think Dusty Rhodes has very much respect for the wrestling fan. I didn't want to be associated with that." 3. Ventura, *FB*: "Lord Steven Regal is without doubt the finest scientific wrestler in the world." 4. Lawler, *USWA*: "I'd love to give McMahon a fiery welcome."



Jim Herd has never been one to withhold his emotions. The former World Championship Wrestling executive vice president is no less candid on WCW booker Dusty Rhodes and the company in a series of interviews on *The Real Wrestling Hotline*.

Herd, who has refrained from public comment since being dismissed from WCW in January 1992, was interviewed by Lance Russell for the hotline and one of the first questions concerned whether Herd was fired or quit WCW, a subject of speculation.

"I was dismissed. A lot of people really aren't prepared to put themselves on the line," said Herd. "I've always felt that if you find something that you believe is not going the way it should go and you believe you should put your job on the line, you should do that."

"I felt we were going on the wrong course with Dusty Rhodes as the booker," Herd continued. "I went to (former WCW president Jack) Petrik and said I felt it was time for Dusty to move on. Petrik obviously felt we'd had enough bookers and he said, 'Are you giving me an ultimatum?' I said, 'Yes...it's either Dusty or me.' He said, 'You.'"

Herd had pointed remarks for Rhodes in the first interview. "Dusty Rhodes was a great wrestler. He knew how to sell himself. I don't think he is a booker, in my opinion. ...I don't think he has very much respect for the wrestling fans. I didn't want to be associated with that."

In later segments, Herd analyzes the state of WCW since his departure. The interviews air Fridays on Option 2 of *The Real Wrestling Hotline* (1-900-903-9030).

More Best of September

SEXIST AWARD - Ventura, *FB*, on Missy Hyatt: "Her business is what normal women should do everyday."

BEST INTERVIEWS - 1. Vince McMahon, for series of *USWA* vignettes. 2. Cactus Jack, *WCW*, for interview on *Fall Brawl* profile.

FEMALE RESPECT AWARD - Boni Blackstone, *WWF*, for continuing solid interview work.

SCHIZOPHRENIA AWARD - Missy Hyatt, *WCW*: "I hate Hollywood. I'm not gonna go to Hollywood!"

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. Schiavone, *WCW*, for continuing foulup of Cole twins. Even though it's a gag, it hurts his credibility. 2. Schiavone, *WCWSN*, Rude and Sid Vicious are hurting DUSTY."

BEST QUESTION - Scott Hudson, *TRWH*: "If Jim Ross were announcing, could that have saved *Fall Brawl*?"

BOO AWARDS - 1. Starr, *NGW*, for Brody remark. 2. Ventura, *FB*, for Missy and Texas remarks.

MATWATCH '93

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